

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM APPLICATION

March 2003



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**NEW JERSEY
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

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**NEW JERSEY
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM**

1. INTRODUCTION

The Interdistrict Public School Choice Program (school choice program) is a five-year pilot program designed to explore whether public school choice will provide a viable educational option for New Jersey students and their families. Under the school choice program, interested New Jersey school districts apply to become choice districts, designating specific open seats into which they will accept non-resident students at the expense of the state.

The school choice program offers flexibility to parents and students in selecting a public school program that best meets the needs of the individual student. In addition to increasing educational opportunities for individual students, it is anticipated that the school choice program will effect systemic improvements such as enhancing academic achievement and improving efficiency through a redistribution of students from overcrowded to under-enrolled school districts.

In the first four choice district application periods, the New Jersey Department of Education (department) has selected fourteen choice districts from among those districts that had submitted competitive applications. Ten choice districts were selected in the first year of the program with students enrolling for the first time for the 2000-2001 school year; one additional district was selected for the second year of the program with students enrolling for the first time for the 2001-2002 school year; two additional districts were selected for the third year of the program with students enrolling for the first time for the 2002-2003 school year; and one additional district was selected for the fourth year of the program with students enrolling for the first time for the 2003-2004 school year.

The current choice districts are:

COUNTY	DISTRICT
Atlantic	Folsom
Bergen	Englewood
Burlington	Washington Township
Camden	Brooklawn
Cumberland	Cumberland Regional
Gloucester	South Harrison
Hudson	Hoboken

COUNTY	DISTRICT
Hunterdon	Bloomsbury
Monmouth	Upper Freehold Regional
Morris	Mine Hill
Ocean	Stafford Township
Salem	Salem City
Union	Kenilworth
Warren	Belvidere

Since the law provides for a total of 21 choice districts, or one per county, the opportunity to apply to become a choice district with choice students enrolled beginning in the 2004-2005 school year is offered this year only to districts in Cape May, Essex, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset and Sussex counties.

Information about the choice districts selected for the 2000-2001, 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 school years may be found in Appendix A.

2. WHY APPLY TO BECOME A CHOICE DISTRICT?

A school district is eligible to participate in the program as a choice district if it

- has classroom space available,
- submits a completed application in a timely manner, and
- receives department approval to participate.

Generally, the districts that apply to become choice districts include those experiencing:

- declining enrollment,
- need to decrease class size,
- need to implement innovative programs,
- need to increase the financial resources available to the district, and/or
- need to diversify the student population.

2.1 CHOICE DISTRICT FUNDING

Each choice district receives a new form of categorical aid called “school choice aid” for each choice student who enrolls in the choice district. Even choice districts that do not currently receive core curriculum standards aid will receive school choice aid for each enrolled choice student. In addition, choice districts will receive all associated categorical aids for each enrolled choice student.

Choice districts in district factor group A or B receive school choice aid at a rate equal to the weighted per-pupil maximum T&E amount. All other choice districts receive school choice aid at a rate equal to the weighted per-pupil T&E amount.

PER-PUPIL SCHOOL CHOICE AID FOR THE 2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR (based on the March 2000 Biennial Report)

School Level	A & B Districts	All Other Districts
Elementary (1-5)	\$8,309	\$7,913
Middle School (6-8)	\$8,605	\$8,195
High School (9-12)	\$9,221	\$8,782

School choice aid for the 2004-2005 school year will be based on the March 2002 Biennial Report, unless the per-pupil amount continues to be frozen at 2001-2002 levels.

School choice aid is outside the cap and unrestricted. A choice district can expect to receive current year funding for all choice students counted on its October Application for State School Aid (ASSA) for the current school year, in addition to those enrolled for the upcoming school year during the first application cycle, and those projected to be enrolled for the upcoming school year during the second application cycle. Any necessary adjustments will be made through the standard state aid adjustment process. See section **4.2(a) STUDENT APPLICATION TIMELINES** on page 14.

Any students attending the district on a parent-paid tuition basis when the district is approved as a choice district automatically become choice students in the first year in which the choice district makes seats available to choice students. At that time, the parents of those students will no longer be responsible for tuition since the district will receive school choice aid for each formerly parent-paid tuition student.

In the past, the department has provided outreach funds to assist each choice district in the implementation of its required regionwide public information program and parent information center. Whether the department will be able to continue to provide outreach funds will depend upon the budget approved for the 2004 fiscal year. The outreach funds have been disbursed based on the size of the school choice program in each district: \$10,000 for each district with 100 or more available seats; \$6,000 for each district with 50 or more but fewer than 100 available seats; and \$4,000 for each district with fewer than 50 available seats. The size of the program is determined by the number of seats available in the choice district, as reported by that choice district and approved by the department prior to the disbursement of funds. For more information on the requirements for the regionwide public information program and the parent information center see sections **3.5(d) REGIONWIDE PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER** and **3.5(e) PARENT INFORMATION CENTER** on page 12 below.

Examples of how some of the current choice districts have benefited from school choice aid include:

- increase in diversity of student population
- reduction of a projected 25-cent tax increase to an actual increase of five cents;
- replacement of lost state aid;
- hiring of additional teachers;
- addition of class sections;
- reduction in class size;
- increase in instructional hours or days;
- expansion of specialized programs such as Reading Recovery;
- creation of new programs;
- purchase of new classroom computers; and
- installation of an interactive video distance learning classroom.

2.2 CLASS SIZE REDUCTION

Participation in the school choice program provides an excellent opportunity for the choice district to reduce class size. Since the choice district chooses the grade level(s) in which it will make seats available and determines the number of seats it will make available (see **3.4 MAKING SEATS AVAILABLE FOR CHOICE STUDENTS** at page 10 below), the choice district can elect to open the number of seats at a particular grade level which, added to the number of resident students at that grade level, will enable the choice district to create two smaller classes, instead of the one large class of resident students. For example, a choice district with 25 resident first graders could choose to open 15 seats in first grade for a total of 40 first graders, and then divide the first grade into two classes with 20 students each. The amount of school choice aid received for 15 first graders (\$124,635 for a DFG A or B district, \$118,695 for any other district) should be more than sufficient to cover the cost of an additional first-grade teacher.

Several of the current choice districts have been able to use school choice aid in just such a way in order to reduce class size. For example, the Kenilworth School District which had made seats available in grades 9 and 10 was able to reduce class size in grade 6 where it had made no seats available for choice students by using school choice aid to hire an additional teacher.

2.3 EXPANSION OF PROGRAMS

School choice aid may also provide an opportunity for a choice district to initiate innovative programs, which the district would otherwise be unable to fund, and/or to expand existing programs. Such innovative programming provides educational advantages and expands opportunities for the choice district's resident students, as well as for the choice students who may participate in the programs offered by the choice district.

Several of the current choice districts have been able to implement outstanding school-to-career offerings for resident and choice students with the assistance of school choice aid, and several have added programs in music and the arts. Other choice districts, including Bloomsbury and Cumberland Regional High School, have been able to expand their technology-based opportunities for all students attending the district.

2.4 WIDER HORIZONS FOR CHOICE DISTRICT STUDENTS

The school choice program provides each choice district with the opportunity to expand its potential student body to include students of different backgrounds and with different experiences from those of the district's resident students. Choice districts that offer specialized programs can attract students who have talents and interests particular to that program and who will bring their own valuable contributions to the school community. For example, Salem City High School's Performance Dance Pathways program provides an educational choice for talented dancers from beyond the pool of students residing in the district itself, and Englewood's Academies@Englewood have attracted students from districts throughout Bergen County.

Small choice districts in small towns have been able to enrich their school communities or simply to add new faces to the school family. In one small rural district, sixth-grade

student explained that they were looking forward to choice students joining their school because it would provide an opportunity for the resident students to make new friends.

Participation in the school choice program has also provided expanded opportunities for students to contribute to their school communities. Several choice districts, including Mine Hill, have instituted "buddy" programs in which each choice student who will be attending the district in the next school year is paired with a resident student in the class the choice student will be joining. The resident student "buddy" is responsible for introducing the new student to the school for a visit during the current school year, and will be the new student's guide and resource when the new student joins the class. Pairs of buddies have remained in contact between the visit and the start of the new school year and have formed firm friendships by the time they are classmates. Learning to be responsible to and for each other is an important lesson for all children.

3. BECOMING A CHOICE DISTRICT

3.1 ELIGIBILITY

A district board of education of a school district established pursuant to Chapter 8 or Chapter 13 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes (*N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-2; *N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-2.1) in the following counties is eligible to apply to become a choice district: Cape May, Essex, Mercer, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset and Sussex.

Up to seven districts will be selected to join the Interdistrict Public School Choice pilot program for the fifth year of implementation (the 2004-2005 school year). Only one district may be selected from each county.

3.2 SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

An eligible LEA can apply to participate in the school choice program by submitting a completed application to the Department of Education. Instructions for completing the application can be found in section **6. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION** on pages 20 of this document.

An original and two copies of the completed application must be sent to:

Interdistrict Public School Choice Program
Division of Educational Programs and Assessment
New Jersey State Department of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0500

Applications delivered in person or by package delivery services must be received in the Department of Education no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 30, 2003. Applications submitted by mail must be postmarked by May 30, 2003.

3.3 SELECTION OF CHOICE DISTRICTS

An Application Review Team composed of staff from the regional and/or county offices, the Division of Finance, the Interdistrict Public School Choice office, and program offices in the Department of Education will review all applications received by May 30, 2003 using the criteria established at *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-5* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.2*. The criteria include the following:

- the quality and variety of academic programs offered for choice students' participation;
- the potential effectiveness of the student selection process and of the admissions criteria established in the application;
- the budgetary ramifications for the applicant district;
- the fiscal ramifications of approval on any district(s) currently in a sending/receiving relationship;
- the impact on student population diversity in the district; and
- the degree to which the program will promote or reduce educational quality in the choice district and the sending districts.

3.4 MAKING SEATS AVAILABLE FOR CHOICE STUDENTS

A choice district may make seats available to choice students in grades 1 through 10 only. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7(a)*; *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-2.2*.

Before each student application cycle, the choice district itself identifies the grade levels in which it will make seats available to school choice program students, and the number of seats it will make available at each of those grade levels. Some of the current choice districts have made seats available at every grade level; some have made seats available in only some grade levels; and some have made seats available only in specific high school programs. For more information on the seats available in the current choice districts, see Appendix A.

Adjustments to the number of seats available in the choice district can be made with the approval of the department. This is a flexible process and department staff works closely with each choice district to ensure that all requests for adjustments are expedited.

3.5 CHOICE DISTRICT PROCEDURES

A choice district:

- must accept students on a first-come, first-served basis. If there are more applicants than there are seats, the choice district must hold a lottery to select its choice students. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7a*; *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)5*;
- may establish reasonable criteria to select prospective choice program students. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7b*. Reasonable criteria are those established and applied by the district to determine the admission to the program of the resident students of the district and may include the student's interest in the program offered by the choice district. *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)2*;

- shall not discriminate in admission policies on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a handicapped person, proficiency in the English language or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7b; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(b)*;
- shall accept all of the credits earned toward graduation by a student while attending the school(s) of the district of residence. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7f; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-7.1(a)*.

3.5(a) STUDENTS CLASSIFIED AS ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

As provided in *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7c* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(c)*, a choice district may reject the application for enrollment of a student who has been classified as eligible for special education services pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:46*:

- if the student's individualized educational program could not be implemented in the district; or
- the enrollment of that student would require the district to fundamentally alter the nature of its educational program; or
- the enrollment of that student would create an undue financial or administrative burden on the district.

However, a choice district shall not prohibit the enrollment of a student based upon a determination that the additional cost of educating the student would exceed the amount of additional state aid received as a result of the student's enrollment. *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7c; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(c)*.

3.5(b) PARENT-PAID TUITION STUDENTS

Districts may not maintain a parent-paid tuition program pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3* simultaneously with participating as choice districts in the school choice program. If a district that has previously accepted parent-paid tuition students is chosen as a choice district, that district must permit students previously enrolled as parent-paid tuition students to become choice program students, and the district may not continue to accept parent-paid tuition students. (*N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-8d; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)4*).

These students will be funded by the state as are all other choice program students.

3.5(c) TRANSPORTATION OF CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS

The choice district is responsible for transportation services for choice program students who reside more than two miles in grades K through 8 and/or more than two and one-half miles in grades 9 through 12, and who reside 20 miles or fewer from the choice district's school. [*N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4.1 (b)*]. The choice district will receive state aid for each choice program student transported. (*N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4.1(a)*). Also see *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-8*).

As provided in *N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4.1(a)*, a choice district can provide either transportation or aid in lieu of transportation pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 39-1, et seq.* (Also see *N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-9*).

Parents will have the responsibility for transportation for choice program students residing more than 20 miles from the choice district's school. [N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4.1(d)].

Inasmuch as a choice school is considered to be a public school offering a specialized program, transportation of school choice program students does not trigger the district's obligation to transport private school students. [N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4.1(a)].

The full text of the transportation regulations pertaining to the school choice program is available in Appendix F of this document.

3.5(d) REGIONWIDE PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

Each choice district is required to establish a regionwide public information program to provide information to the public about the interdistrict public school choice program in general and the choice program offered by the district in particular. [N.J.A.C. 6A:12-7.1(b)]. The public information program must be targeted to *all* communities from which the choice district can anticipate attracting students. Choice districts may not utilize the public information program to target a specific community or communities.

At a minimum, the public information program must include the following:

- notification that the district has been chosen as a choice district;
- information regarding student application procedures; and
- information regarding the district, its schools, its programs, and its student and course policies.

All information disseminated through the regionwide public information program should include the web address of the school choice program. www.nj.gov/njded/choice/.

If the district has its own web site, all interdistrict public school choice program information should also be available on that site.

3.5(e) PARENT INFORMATION CENTER

Each choice district must establish and maintain a parent information center. [N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-4a(2), 10; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-7(d)]. The parent information center need not be a physical location. The parent information centers in current choice districts include a telephone hot line, a contact person in the school guidance office, and a table with information in the school office. The center should make available to all interested parents both written materials and access to a person with whom to discuss the program.

The center must collect and disseminate information about participating interdistrict public school choice programs and schools and must assist parents and guardians in submitting applications for enrollment of choice program students in appropriate programs and schools.

Parents should be informed of the information that is available on the Department of Education

Web site, and should be provided with the web address of the department's school choice program, www.nj.gov/njded/choice/.

Since the school choice program is a pilot program, the department is required to submit annual reports to the Legislature. In order to assist with those reports, the department collects data from the choice districts throughout the year. Department staff provides easy-to-use forms and follows up any questions about data with telephone calls.

Data collected include demographic and student participation data and an update on the number of available openings for the upcoming school year, as well as informal narratives. School choice staff makes every effort to minimize the district administrative time involved in data collection.

4. CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS

Any student accepted as a choice program student in a choice district becomes, for all intents and purposes, a resident student of the choice district and is subject to all rules and regulations and entitled to all privileges offered to other resident students of the choice district.

The notice of intent to enroll signed by the parent or legal guardian of a choice student is binding on the student who must remain enrolled in the choice district for at least one full school year with certain exceptions. (N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(f)1,2). However, a student will be permitted to transfer back to the district of residence or apply to a different choice district during the next application period. (N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7e; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-5.2).

Any student enrolled as a choice program student in a choice district shall be entitled to remain as a choice program student in that district until graduation. (N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7e,15; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-5.1). Graduation is defined as completion of the highest grade offered in the choice district. For example, in a K-6 district, completion of grade 6 would constitute graduation.

In the event of termination of the choice program in the choice district or statewide, any student enrolled as a choice program student in a choice district is entitled to remain enrolled in that district until graduation. (N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-4b(3); N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.1(d)3).

4.1 STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Participation in the school choice program is limited to students entering grades 1 through 10. To be eligible to participate in the school choice program, a student must be enrolled at the time of application in grades K through 9 in a public school of his/her district of residence, and must have attended public school in the district of residence for one full year immediately prior to enrollment in the choice district. [N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-7a; N.J.A.C. 6A:12-2.2(a)]. To meet this requirement, the student must have been counted on the October ASSA of the district of residence in the current school year, must complete the current school year in the district of residence, and must meet all attendance requirements of the district of residence.

The law and regulations cited above establish that the following students are not eligible for participation in the school choice program:

- students who are being home-schooled;
- students whose families move to a new school district during the school year;
- students attending nonpublic schools;
- students attending public schools outside their district of residence on a parent-paid tuition basis;
- students who are children of teachers attending, under provisions of the teacher contract, the school district in which the parent teaches; or
- students who do not fulfill the attendance requirements of the district of residence.

Students residing out of state may not participate in the school choice program. [*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-2.2(b)].

4.2 STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS

Samples of the forms required for the student application process outlined below are available on the Department of Education web site, www.nj.gov/njded/choice/, and in Appendix D of this document.

Beginning with the student application process for students seeking to be admitted to a choice district in the 2001-2002 school year, the department instituted a two-cycle student application process. [*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-4.3(a)]. Each choice district conducts a student application process in the fall of the calendar year preceding the school year for which the students are applying to attend the choice district. For example, students will be applying in the fall of 2003 for admission to choice districts for the 2004-2005 school year.

In the event that the choice district has seats available for choice students after the completion of the fall student application process, the choice district may conduct a second application process in the spring of the calendar year in which the students are applying to attend the choice district. For example, students will apply in spring 2003 for admission to the choice district for the 2003-2004 school year.

In addition to the two-step application process, the interdistrict public school choice program regulations provide for the establishment of a waiting list in any district of residence or choice district that conducts a lottery to determine which students may participate in the school choice program.

4.2(a) STUDENT APPLICATION TIMELINES

The regulations governing the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program have established a two-cycle application process. The **TIMELINES** below show the steps that must be taken and the documents that must be submitted in order for a student to participate in the school choice program. The dates given apply to the student application process for the 2004-2005 school year only.

For a full discussion of the student application process, go to the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program web site at www.state.nj.us/njded/choice and click on **Student Application Process**. Also see N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3

FIRST CYCLE APPLICATION TIMELINES

Must be received by:	Document	Sent from/to:
November 3, 2003	Notice of Intent to Participate in the School Choice Program	Parent/Guardian must submit Notice to the Superintendent of the district in which the student resides.
November 25, 2003	Written notification to the parents that the student may or may not participate in the school choice program	District of residence sends to the parent/guardian.
December 5, 2003	Student Application to choice district, <i>including written notification from district of residence*</i>	Parent/Guardian submits to the choice district.
January 6, 2004	Choice District Notice of Acceptance or Rejection of a student's application	Choice district sends to parent/guardian <i>and to the district of residence.</i>
January 15, 2004	Student's Notice of Intent to Enroll in the choice district	Parent/Guardian sends this notice to the choice district.

****In the event that the district of residence fails to provide timely notification to the student's parent or legal guardian stating whether or not the student may participate in the school choice program, the parent or legal guardian of the student may submit the application directly to the choice district without the district of residence notification.***

FIRST CYCLE CHOICE DISTRICT WAITING LIST TIMELINES

Must be received by:	Document	Sent from/to:
January 27, 2004	Notice of Acceptance to next student(s) on waiting list	If the choice district does not receive Notice of Intent to Enroll by January 15 from all students accepted in the first round, the choice district sends the Notice of Acceptance to enough students on the waiting list, in order, to fill the seats available.
February 5, 2004	Student's Notice of Intent to Enroll in the choice district	Parent/guardian sends this notice to the choice district.

If a choice district has not filled all its available seats in the first application cycle, the choice district may accept applications in the second application cycle for which the timelines are provided below.

SECOND CYCLE APPLICATION TIMELINES

Must be received by:	Document	Sent from/to:
March 3, 2004	Notice of Intent to Participate in the School Choice Program	Parent/guardian must submit this notice to the Superintendent of the district in which the student resides.
March 25, 2004	Written notification to the parents that the student may or may not participate in the school choice program*	District of residence sends notification to parent/guardian.
April 7, 2004	Student Application to choice district, <i>including written notification from district of residence**</i>	Parent/guardian submits the application to the choice district.
May 5, 2004	Choice district Notice of Acceptance or Rejection of the student's application	Choice district sends this notice to parent/guardian <i>and to the district of residence.</i>
May 17, 2004	Student's Notice of Intent to Enroll in the choice district	Parent/guardian sends this notice to the choice district.

****If the district of residence conducted a lottery in the first application cycle, it will have established a waiting list of students interested in applying to a choice district. The district of residence must first go to the waiting list when accepting students in the second application cycle.***

*****In the event that the district of residence fails to provide timely notification to the student's parent or legal guardian stating whether or not the student may participate in the school choice program, the parent or legal guardian of the student may submit the application directly to the choice district without notification from the district of residence.***

SECOND CYCLE CHOICE DISTRICT WAITING LIST TIMELINES

Must be received by:	Document	Sent from/to:
May 26, 2004	Notice of Acceptance to next student(s) on waiting list	If the choice district does not receive Notice of Intent to Enroll by May 15 from all students accepted in the second round, the choice district sends the Notice of Acceptance to enough students on the waiting list, in order, to fill the seats available.
June 7, 2004	Student's Notice of Intent to Enroll in the choice district	Parent/guardian sends this notice to the choice district.

5. DISTRICTS OF RESIDENCE

The school choice program includes controls designed to minimize the negative consequences of the program for districts of residence (sending districts). Sending districts will receive impact aid and will be able to establish enrollment limitations for their students who want to participate in the school choice program.

In addition, the participation of sending district students in the school choice program is limited by the number of seats made available in the choice district and the fact that the sending district's students will be competing for those seats from students from other potential sending districts.

5.1 IMPACT AID FOR DISTRICTS OF RESIDENCE

For each resident student attending a choice district, the district of residence will receive 75 per cent of core curriculum standards aid in the first year of the student's attendance at the choice district, 50 per cent in the second year of the student's attendance at the choice district, 25 per

cent in the third year of the student's attendance at the choice district, and no aid in all subsequent years.

5.2 DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE RESOLUTIONS TO LIMIT STUDENT PARTICIPATION

The district of residence shall not prevent or discourage its students from participating in the school choice program. [*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-1.2(b)].

However, pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-7b(1), (2) and *N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)1, the board of education of the district of residence may limit the number of its district students allowed to participate in the choice program by adopting a resolution to do the following:

1. limit the enrollment of its students in a choice district to 2 percent of the number of students per grade level per year in the sending district, limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to paragraph 2, below; and/or
2. limit the enrollment of its students in a choice district to 7 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district.

With the approval of the Commissioner of the Department of Education, the board of education of the district of residence may adopt a resolution that exceeds the enrollment restriction percentages of 2 percent per grade per year and/or 7 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district as follows:

1. to a maximum of 10 percent of the number of students per grade level per year in the sending district, limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to paragraph 2, below; and/or
2. to a maximum of 15 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district. (*N.J.S.A.* 8b(3); *N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)2).

The calculation of enrollment of the district of residence must be based on the October ASSA. The method to be used in calculating enrollment is described in *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-8b(4), (5); and *N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)3.

In the event that a district adopts any resolution restricting the enrollment of its students in choice districts and student requests for participation exceed the limits set by the district of residence, the district must conduct a lottery. (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)4).

In the first application cycle, the results of the lottery must be used to determine which students will be eligible to participate in the school choice program and to develop a waiting list of the remaining students to be used in the second application cycle. In the second application cycle, it is not necessary for the district of residence to develop a waiting list.

In the event that a district does not adopt a resolution restricting the enrollment of its students in choice districts, the district must allow all interested students to apply for admission to the choice district(s).

The board of education of the district of residence may also adopt a resolution to restrict enrollment of a specific student on the basis of exceptional circumstances that would affect the sending district's instructional program. The resolution must detail the reasons for the restriction and will be subject to the approval of the Commissioner. [*N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-8b(5)c; *N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3-1(b)].

5.3 DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE PROCEDURES

Upon receipt of a Notification of Intent to Enroll in a Choice District from a student residing in its district, the district of residence must verify that the student is enrolled in a school of the district of residence and that the student has been counted as a student in the district of residence in the October ASSA of the current school year. (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-4.3(c)1).

In the event that a district adopts a resolution restricting the enrollment of its students in choice districts and student requests for participation exceed the enrollment percentage limitations set by the district of residence, the district must conduct a lottery. The lottery must be held in enough time to meet the deadline established by law for notification to the parent or legal guardian. (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)4i).

In the first application cycle, the results of the lottery must be used to determine which students will be eligible to participate in the school choice program and to develop a waiting list of the remaining students to be used in the second application cycle. (*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-3.1(a)4i, ii). Each participant in the lottery must be assigned a number reflecting the student's place on the list of eligible students or on the waiting list.

In the event that some or all of the students in the district of residence who received permission to apply to a choice district in the first application process do not enroll in a choice district, the district of residence must first go to its waiting list to ascertain which students will be eligible to apply to a choice district in the second application cycle. In the event that there are more spaces than may be filled by the students on the waiting list, the district of residence must allow additional students who express interest in applying to a choice district to do so. If there are more interested students than would be permitted by the district's enrollment limitation percentage the district must conduct a lottery of all *newly interested* students to determine which students may apply to a choice district. This lottery should not include students on the first application cycle waiting list who must be offered the opportunity to apply to a choice district *before* the newly interested students.

In the second application cycle, it is not necessary for the district of residence to develop a waiting list.

The district of residence must provide to the parent or legal guardian of all students who have submitted a notice of intent to enroll in a choice district by the due date, written notification that the student may or may not participate in the school choice program. [*N.J.A.C.* 6A:12-4.3(c)].

The notification that a student may not participate in the school choice program must include an explanation. In the first application cycle, if the student has been placed on the waiting list, the

notification must include that information and provide the waiting list number assigned to the student.

In the first application cycle, the written notification must be sent by the district in time to be ***received by*** the parent or legal guardian by November 25, 2003.

In the second application cycle, the written notification must be sent by the district in time to be ***received by*** the parent or legal guardian by March 25, 2004.

In the event that the district of residence fails to provide timely notification to the student's parent or legal guardian stating whether or not the student may participate in the school choice program, then all such students must be allowed to participate in the school choice program and may submit their applications directly to the choice district.

6. COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

For the entire application, please provide a table of contents, labeling and paginating each section. Attach all supporting documentation as appendices, which must be referenced in the body of the application.

Forms for completing the application are available on pages 27-34 of this document and on the Department of Education web site. www.state.nj.us/njded/choice.

6.1 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

A technical assistance workshop will be provided for districts interested in applying to the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program:

April 8, 2003
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

New Jersey Department of Education
100 River View Plaza
Trenton, New Jersey

Fourth floor conference room

To register for the technical assistance workshop, please complete and submit the registration form included in Appendix B or call (609) 633-9630.

Directions are included in Appendix C.

6.2 COVER PAGE

1. Provide all information requested on the cover page.

2. Include the name, title, phone number, fax number and e-mail address of the district staff member assigned as the contact person with the Department of Education for the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program. The contact person should be familiar with the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program legislation and regulations, as well as with the choice program offered by the district.

It would be helpful if the contact person were someone other than or in addition to the district superintendent. Since the many requirements of the superintendent's position can make her/him difficult to reach at times, it works better to have a different, or an additional, staff member available to parents and to department staff.

3. Enter the date on which the district board of education has approved the submission of the district's application. If the board of education will not meet until after the due date of the application, enter the date on which the board of education will be asked to approve the application submission. Notification of board of education approval must be forwarded to the Interdistrict Public School Choice office before announcement of the selected choice districts that is scheduled to take place no later than July 30, 2003.

6.3 CLASSROOM SPACE IDENTIFICATION FORM

Complete a separate form for each school in which seats will be available for choice program students. Copy the form as needed.

6.4 PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Forms for completing the Program Narrative are available on the Department of Education web site. www.state.nj.us/njded/choice. If the applicant does not use the Department of Education forms in developing the answers to the three-part program narrative, the applicant must label each section and restate each question or statement prior to the response, following the sequence presented in the three-part program narrative section.

Please provide complete and concise answers to every question and statement presented.

PART I: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION

1. Provide a description of the district, its schools, and its programs, *e.g.*, whole school reform, reading readiness, technology infusion, alternative learning experiences, enrichment classes, or literature-based reading.

Include a copy of the district's student handbook, the course description guide, and transportation policy with your application.

2. Describe the demographics of the community and of the student population of the district.

3. Provide a description of the program to be offered to interdistrict public school choice students. This may be a specific program, such as a theatre arts program for high school students, or simply the opportunity to share in the small classes and individual attention on which the district prides itself.
4. Provide a description of the organizational structure of the district. This may take the form of an organizational chart or may be presented as narrative.
5. Identify the individual and/or office within the district responsible for administration and coordination of the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program.
6. Provide a listing of those districts likely to participate as sending districts in your district's school choice program.
7. Provide a description of any previous experience that the district has had with intradistrict, as well as interdistrict, choice programs.
8. Provide a three-year plan for the choice program, including a projection of the number of seats that will be available in the district for the second and third years of participation in the school choice program. Identify the schools and grade levels in which you anticipate having available seats in each year.

PLEASE NOTE: The three-year plan is just that, a plan. It is not a commitment.

Before each student application cycle, the choice district itself identifies the grade levels and/or programs in which it will make seats available to school choice program students, as well as the number of seats in each grade level and/or program. Adjustments to the number of seats available in the choice district can be made with the approval of the department. This is a flexible process and department staff works closely with each choice district to ensure that all requests for adjustments are expedited.

Show information in the following, or a similar, format:

In year one, the following seats will be made available to choice program students:

Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____
Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____*

In year two, the following seats will be made available to choice program students:

Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____
Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____*

In year three, the following seats will be made available to choice program students:

Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____
Grade____	No. of Seats: _____	Grade____	No. of Seats: _____*

*add as many grade levels as necessary.

PART II: STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS

1. The district must describe the method by which it will ensure that nonresident choice program students have been selected for enrollment through a random, unbiased process such as that described in the sample language below. The sample language may be incorporated into the district's application.

Sample language:

Choice program students will be admitted to ***[fill in name of district]*** on a first-come, first-served basis. If the number of applications for choice seats exceeds the number of seats available, the choice district will hold a lottery. A number will be assigned to each applicant and selection will be made by a random drawing.

2. Provide a student population diversity analysis of the potential impact of the program on the ethnic, racial, economic, and geographic diversity of the student population in the applicant district and in the likely participating district(s).

2(a). STUDENT POPULATION DIVERSITY

An important goal of the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program is to increase heterogeneity in choice districts that might otherwise remain homogeneous. Therefore, applicant districts are asked to address their expectations of the impact of the school choice program on student population diversity both in their own districts and in the districts they identify as potential sending districts.

As provided in *N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-4b, student population diversity must include, but not be limited to, the ethnic, racial, economic and geographic diversity of a district's student population.

The Commissioner may take appropriate action, consistent with state and federal law, to provide that student population diversity is maintained in all districts participating in the school choice program. Such action may include, but is not limited to the following:

- directing a choice district to take appropriate steps to successfully implement the district's plan for maintaining student population diversity;
 - restricting the number of choice program students from a specific district of residence;
 - restricting the authority of a choice district to accept additional choice program students in the future; and/or
 - revoking approval of a choice district. [*N.J.S.A.* 18A:36B-4b(1),(2),(3)].
3. Provide a plan, such as that described in the sample language below, for maintaining student population diversity in the choice district and in the likely participating district(s).

Sample language:

The district will review its current multiyear equity plan with staff from the Office of Bilingual Education and Equity Issues in the New Jersey Department of Education and will:

1. extend the plan to include all choice program students; and
2. modify its plan to reflect the impact of the choice program students on district diversity, if necessary.

The applicant district assumes that all sending districts will take appropriate steps to review and modify their multiyear equity plans to reflect the impact of the choice program on the diversity of their districts.

4. In addition, ensure that the plan takes into consideration court-ordered or administrative court-ordered desegregation plans.
5. Describe in detail the “reasonable criteria” that will be used to select prospective students pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)2*.

Sample language:

Resident students of the choice district seeking entrance to the _____ program are required to meet the following criteria: ***[List criteria applicable to resident students, except any residency requirement]***

The same criteria and only these criteria will be applied to applicants to become choice program students.

Option: Applicants to become choice program students can also be required in the application to indicate an interest in the program offered by the choice district.

6. Describe the mechanism that the district will utilize to ensure that choice program students have applied to the district for educational purposes and not for athletic, extracurricular or social reasons.

Sample language:

Applicants to become choice program students must indicate on their applications an interest in attending the choice district for academic reasons only and not for social, extracurricular or athletic activities.

7. Provide a timeline for the district's student selection process. The district's timeline must fall within the Department of Education timelines as shown in section **4.2a STUDENT APPLICATION TIMELINES**, on page 14.
8. Discuss the district's plan for transportation of choice program students.
9. State clearly whether the district will accept students who live more than 20 miles from the choice school.
10. If the district will accept students who live more than 20 miles from the choice school, establish a specific acceptable distance that will not interfere with students' educational experiences.

Include an assurance that the amount of time students must spend in transit will not have a negative impact on their educational opportunities and achievement.

PART III : PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

1. Outline the district's planned public information program, including at a minimum:
 - timelines for the development and implementation of the regionwide public information program;
 - notification that the district is a choice district;
 - student application procedures;
 - descriptions of the district, its schools, its programs, and its student and course policies. Include information on policies that prohibit discrimination and that ensure that all students will have barrier-free access to school programs; and
 - method for updating information in the public information program.
2. Outline the district's planned parent information center, including at a minimum:
 - the district's timelines for the development and implementation of the parent information center;
 - the activities planned for the center; and
 - the materials that will be made available through the center.

**7. FORMS FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION
TO BECOME A
CHOICE DISTRICT**

These forms may also be downloaded from the department website at:

www.state.nj.us/njded/choice/distapp

Due: May 30, 2003

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE APPLICATION

Cover Page

County/District Code: ____ / ____

District Name: _____

District Operating Type and District Factor Group: _____

Street or Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

Superintendent: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Seats Available for Nonresident Choice program students by Grade Level:

Grade 1	No. of seats: ____	Grade 4	No. of seats: ____	Grade 7	No. of seats: ____
Grade 2	No. of seats: ____	Grade 5	No. of seats: ____	Grade 8	No. of seats: ____
Grade 3	No. of seats: ____	Grade 6	No. of seats: ____	Grade 9	No. of seats: ____
				Grade 10	No. of seats: ____

Total seats available in district: _____

Please mark with an X all that apply to your district:

- Currently in a formal sending/receiving relationship ____
If yes, as a sending district ____ or a receiving district ____?
If yes, with which district(s) and grade level(s) ____?
- Level II monitoring status ____
- Under a court-ordered or voluntary desegregation plan ____
- Currently receiving nonresident students on a tuition basis pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3* ____
If yes, how many? ____
 - Currently receiving nonresident students who are children of teaching staff members permitted by contract or local policy to be enrolled in the district without payment of tuition ____
If yes, how many? ____

I certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief the information contained herein is true, accurate, and correct.

Signature of Chief School Administrator

Print Name of CSA

Date

Date of Board Approval

Due: May 30, 2003

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE APPLICATION
Classroom Space Identification Form

USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH SCHOOL

District: _____

School Name: _____ **School Code:** _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Grade Level: _____ Current Class Size: _____ No. of seats available: _____
Class Size with Choice program students: _____ Current Student/Teacher Ratio: _____
Student/Teacher Ratio with all seats (including choice) filled: _____

Copy form as needed.

Due: May 30, 2003

**INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE APPLICATION
PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

(Instructions for completing the application forms appear on pp. 26ff. of this document.)

PART I: DISTRICT IDENTIFICATION

1. Description of the district, its schools and its programs. *Attach a copy of the student handbook, course description guide and transportation policy.*

2.
 - a. Community demographics

 - b. Student population demographics

3. Description of program to be offered to choice program students.

4. **Organizational structure of the district**
5. **The individual and/or office within the district responsible for the administration and coordination of the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program.**
6. **List of likely participating districts**
7. **Previous experience with intradistrict/interdistrict choice programs**
8. **Three-year plan**

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM APPLICATION PROGRAM NARRATIVE

PART II: STUDENT SELECTION PROCESS

1. How will the district ensure that nonresident choice program students have been selected for enrollment through a random, unbiased process?
2. Analysis of the potential impact of the choice program on student population diversity
 - a. in your district
 - b. in potential sending districts
3. Plan for maintaining student population diversity
 - a. in your district
 - b. in potential sending districts

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM APPLICATION PROGRAM NARRATIVE

4. **Identify all court-ordered and/or administrative court-ordered desegregation plans affecting your district and/or potential sending districts.**
5. **Describe in detail the “reasonable criteria” that will be used to select prospective students.**
6. **How will the district ensure that nonresident choice program students have applied to the district for educational purposes and not for athletic, extracurricular or social reasons?**

**INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM APPLICATION
PROGRAM NARRATIVE**

- 7. Provide a timeline for the district's student selection process. The district's timelines must fall within the Department of Education timelines set forth in Appendix D.**

- 8. Describe the district's plan for transportation of choice program students.**

- 9. Will the district accept students who live more than 20 miles from the choice school?**

- 10. If the district plans to accept students who live more than 20 miles from the choice school, how far will it extend the radius of acceptable distance and how will it ensure that travel time will not have a negative impact on the students' educational experience?**

PART III: PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

- 34

APPENDIX A:
DESCRIPTIONS OF CHOICE DISTRICTS

**FOLSOM
ATLANTIC COUNTY**

**PreK-8 District
232 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	17
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	42
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	72

PROGRAM:

The Folsom School District has developed a technology curriculum that directly supports the infusion of technology into all curricula areas via integrated technology lesson plans at all grade levels. Folsom's students also participate in such specialized programs as Accelerated/Guided Reader Program and full video editing program for Falcon Television Network.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (609) 561-8666

E-mail: folsomschool@atlanticava.org

Website: www.atlanticava.org/folsom

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

Grade 1	19 seats
Grade 2	9 seats
Grade 3	7 seats
Grade 4	0 seats
Grade 5	17 seats
Grade 6	12 seats
Grade 7	8 seats
Grade 8	0 seats

**ENGLEWOOD CITY
BERGEN COUNTY**

**K-12 District
734 Students**

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the 2003-2004
SCHOOL YEAR**

GRADE 9	75
----------------	-----------

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR 55

PROGRAM:

The career focused Academies@Englewood offer four programs: Finance Academy, Information Systems Academy, Law and Public Safety Academy and Pre-Engineering Academy.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (201) 833-6145

E-mail: jamsmit@ea.epsd.org (James Smith, Director)

Website: www.epsd.org

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
BURLINGTON COUNTY**

**K-8 District
100 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	5
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	7
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	8

PROGRAM:

The Green Bank Elementary School in Washington Township located in the southeast corner of Burlington County was established almost 100 years ago. Washington Township is a rural district in the heart of the Pinelands that offers the benefits of a country school atmosphere. The original school building is still in use, with some classrooms held in a newer brick addition. Classes in what the superintendent, Brian Robinson, describes as a "quiet country school offering a solid education" are limited to 15 children. The school family atmosphere facilitates the continuation of the district's long history of providing quality education. Teachers and staff know all the children, and the children know each other. "Our staff," says Robinson, "is by far our greatest asset."

**AVAILABLE SEATS for
the 2003-2004 SCHOOL
YEAR**

Grade 1	3 seats
Grade 2	4 seats
Grade 3	1 seat
Grade 4	3 seats
Grade 5	1 seat
Grade 6	0 seats
Grade 7	0 seats
Grade 8	1 seat

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (609) 965-3520

**BROOKLAWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
CAMDEN COUNTY**

**PreK-8 District
235 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR 36

PROGRAM:

The Brooklawn Public School District offers a comprehensive educational program in a safe, family-like environment with small class sizes in most grades. In addition to a successful classroom instructional program, the district curriculum includes art, computer literacy, library, music, physical education and health, special education, and gifted and talented programs.

The Brooklawn Public School District envisions a community of life-long learners committed to working collaboratively to develop caring, competent and responsible citizens. The district's mission is to develop self-directed learners who can work cooperatively to become skillful, responsible decision-makers capable of navigating a rapidly changing world. To accomplish its mission, the district provides an integrated core of knowledge through a broad experiential program that fosters the joy of learning and challenges students to develop their talents. Opportunities for creativity and discovery are incorporated into a program that promotes self-assessment and self-growth.

**PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (856) 456-4039
EXTENSION 21**

**E-mail: jkellmayer@snip.net (Dr. John Kellmayer,
Superintendent)**

Website: school.nj.com/school/acostello

AVAILABLE SEATS

for the

2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR

Grade 1	5 seats
Grade 2	5 seats
Grade 3	5 seats
Grade 4	5 seats
Grade 5	5 seats

**CUMBERLAND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

**9-12 District
1169 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	9
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	33
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	48

PROGRAM:

Cumberland Regional School District has opened spaces in its agricultural program for students participating in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program. Students enrolled in this exciting program have the opportunity to participate in challenging academic classes, develop their leadership skills through participation in Future Farmers of America (FFA), gain hands-on laboratory and field experience, and prepare for a future in a wide variety of agriculture-related fields. The agricultural program prepares students for college majors such as agricultural science, biochemistry, chemistry, engineering, environmental sciences, horticulture, landscape architecture, oceanography, pre-veterinary medicine and wildlife management.

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR:**

Grade 9	30 seats
Grade 10	5 seats

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (856) 451-9400 extension 247

E-mail: Kelk@crhsd.org (Katherine Kelk, Principal)

Website: www.crhsd.org

**SOUTH HARRISON SCHOOL DISTRICT
GLOUCESTER COUNTY**

**K-6 District
236 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR 5

PROGRAM:

The mission of the South Harrison School District is to prepare our students to become confident, capable life-long learners and problem solvers by providing learning experiences which foster the intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth necessary to become responsible, productive members of a culturally and economically diverse society.

Toward this end, the South Harrison School District works together in partnership with the staff, home and community to foster a safe, caring, academically challenging and supportive environment.

There are two classes at each grade level. The Board of Education is committed to retaining small class sizes to ensure a maximum degree of individual attention, leading to close student-teacher relationships and fostering a healthy learning environment.

The experienced teaching staff strives to help each student develop strong academic skills within a framework of steady emotional growth and positive self-image. The basic program of instruction includes language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, physical education, library, technology and character education. Our excellent world languages program is currently in its fourth year of implementation in grades K-6.

Of importance to working parents is our After School Program, an option for parents who need extended child care, beyond the regular school day. The children are professionally supervised.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (856) 769-0855

Website: www.southharrison.k12.nj.us

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the**

2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR

Grade 4	4 seats
Grade 6	4 seats

**HOBOKEN
HUDSON COUNTY**

K-12 District
1178 Students in 3 elementary schools
725 Students in 2 middle schools
722 Students in high school

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	3
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	23
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	33

PROGRAM:

The Hoboken School District offers a unique learning experience in a small, safe urban environment. The district has infused technology throughout the curriculum and each school offers special opportunities for students.

For example, the Brandt Middle School, a technology theme school, features a state-of-the-art science lab, an automated library, a computer lab, and a computerized career lab. The Paxton Action Technology Lab includes educational modules of aerodynamics technology, biotechnology, career research, environment, ecology, robotics and structural and flight technologies. Gifted and talented students may enroll in the SHAPE program offered by nearby Stevens Institute of Technology, and all students may participate in the school's highly acclaimed band or chorus, volunteer for environmental studies with the 4H club, or take advantage of enrichment courses in areas such as language arts literacy, math and science.

Hoboken High School's comprehensive curriculum designed to serve a variety of student educational interests includes the International Baccalaureate Program offering an internationally developed curriculum of college level courses, and advanced placement courses in English, social studies and math. Hoboken High School also offers students the opportunity to participate in its award-winning drama program, recently adopted by the renowned Paper Mill Playhouse, interactive TV classrooms, a debate team, a mock trial team and the Harvard Model Congress.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (201) 356-3618

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

Grade 1	5 seats
Grade 2	5 seats
Grade 3	5 seats
Grade 4	5 seats
Grade 5	5 seats
Grade 6	10 seats
Grade 7	5 seats
Grade 8	5 seats
Grade 9	20 seats

**BLOOMSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT
HUNTERDON COUNTY**

**K-8 District
103 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	13
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	30
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	21

PROGRAM:

Bloombsbury is a small (130 students) suburban/rural school district with very small classes and a full offering of supplementary subjects, such as technology, fine arts, and vocal music and services such as counseling and speech therapy. The district prides itself on the staff's ability to take an eclectic approach to instruction, combining proven-effective traditional methodologies with researched-based emerging methodologies.

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR:**

Grade 1	7 seats
Grade 2	0 seats
Grade 3	1 seat
Grade 4	0 seats
Grade 5	5 seats
Grade 6	4 seats
Grade 7	0 seats
Grade 8	6 seats

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (908) 479-4414

E-mail: vpbloombsbury@hotmail.com (Victor A. Paglio, Jr., Superintendent)

Website: www.pburg.k12.nj.us/Bloombsbury/index.htm

**UPPER FREEHOLD REGIONAL
MONMOUTH COUNTY**

**K-12 District
992 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	11
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	27
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	39

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

Grade 9	15 seats
Grade 10	2 seats

PROGRAM:

Upper Freehold Regional School District has opened spaces in its agricultural program at Allentown High School for students participating in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program. The award-winning agricultural science program at Allentown High School offers excellent opportunities for students to pursue vital and realistic career aspirations in the field of agriculture and related areas. The courses available in the program include botany; greenhouse, nursery and landscape management; zoology/veterinary and equine studies; agricultural mechanics; and a cooperative agricultural education experience.

Students in the agricultural science program have the opportunity to participate in the Allentown High School chapter of Future Farmers of America (FFA). FFA is the only national youth organization to be chartered and mandated by federal legislation and is recognized by Congress as an integral part of agricultural education. The FFA program provides the real world experience associated with classroom theory and instruction, and makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (609) 259-2076

E-mail: Ebyc@ufrsd.net (Charles Eby, Director of Guidance)

Website: www.ufrsd.net/ahs/ag/schoolofchoice.htm

**MINE HILL
MORRIS COUNTY**

**K-6 District
366 Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	16
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	51
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	43

PROGRAM:

The school system of Mine Hill is committed to being a recognized leader in education by consistently using innovative ideas and fresh approaches to better serve its students and to enhance community support.

This K-6, one-school district has won many awards, has been designated both a statewide and national Blue Ribbon School, and is one of fourteen districts in the state selected to participate in ACES - Arts Create Excellent Schools, sponsored by the New Jersey Council of the Arts and the New Jersey Department of Education, and has introduced a wide variety of innovative programs into the curriculum. The district's extracurricular activities are focused on family involvement, which provides the potential for integrating not only choice students but also their families into the district.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (973) 366-0590

E-mail: CDBlach@optonLine.net (C.Dan Blachford, Superintendent)

Website: www.morris.k12.nj.us/minehill/index.htm

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the 2003-2004
SCHOOL YEAR**

Grade 1	9 seats
Grade 2	5 seats
Grade 3	1 seat
Grade 4	1 seat
Grade 5	3 seats
Grade 6	3 seats

**STAFFORD TOWNSHIP
OCEAN COUNTY**

**K-6 district
2,000 students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

**First school choice program students will be
attending in the 2003-2004 school year**

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

GRADE 5	10 seats
GRADE 6	10 seats

PROGRAM:

Students in grades 5 and 6 who will be participating in the school choice program will be offered opportunities to participate in a variety of visual and performing arts activities including theatre, dance, improvisation, choreography, rhythmic analysis, musical composition, and communications. Survey courses will be made available for all fifth grade students and opportunities for selected study will be provided to all sixth grade students. In addition, students with identified interests and abilities will also participate in extended day experiences designed to enhance and extend specific skills and talents.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (609) 978-5708 extension 101

**E-mail: [janen@stafford schools.org](mailto:janen@staffordschools.org)
Dr. Judith Stefano-Anen, Director of Instructional Services**

Website: www.staffordschools.org

**SALEM CITY
SALEM COUNTY**

**K-12 District
375 Middle School Students
503 High School Students**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR 2

PROGRAM:

Salem High School offers **School-to-Career and College Pathways** programs in:

- Performance Dance (*in our new dance studio with our instructor from the Philadelphia Freedom Theater*)
- Digital Communications (*creating webmasters and on-line publishers*)
- Video Communications (*using a new performance studio and digital video editing lab*)
- Business Technologies (*utilizing five state-of-the-art computer labs and industry standard software*)
- International Studies (*including European and Asian languages*)
- Health, Recreation and Exercise Science (*including coaching and lifesaving certifications*)
- Energy Engineering (*in partnership with PSE&G Nuclear Training Center*)
- Agricultural Landscaping and Turf Management (*with acres of grounds for turf and nurseries*).

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (856) 935-3900

**E-mail: goldberg@saalem.nj.org
(Gary Goldberg, Director, Office of Curriculum and Instruction)**

Website: www.salemnj.org

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

Grade 7	5 seats
Grade 8	5 seats
Grade 9	25 seats
Grade 10	25 seats

**KENILWORTH
UNION COUNTY**

**K-12 District
419 Students in Middle/High School**

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2000-2001 SCHOOL YEAR	22
2001-2002 SCHOOL YEAR	61
2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR	72

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 SCHOOL YEAR**

GRADE 7	15 seats
GRADE 8	5 seats

PROGRAM:

The David Brearley Middle/High School offers an excellent setting for students interested in a small, personalized and caring educational experience. The middle school provides 7th and 8th grade students with a solid instructional program utilizing a modified block schedule that allows for extended instructional periods in mathematics, social studies, language arts and science. Students may also explore subjects such as Spanish, Italian, art, music, family and consumer science and technology through a series of cycle courses.

The comprehensive high school program includes both basic and advanced level courses in a wide variety of subject areas including language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, world languages, the arts and office systems technology. Through a partnership with Schering-Plough, Kenilworth offers an outstanding science program with up-to-the-minute laboratory equipment, including a computer program that allows students to design bridges, buildings and spacecraft. The design of the high school curriculum and course of study reflects the overall philosophy of the Coalition of Essential Schools and a commitment to high standards and high levels of achievement for all students.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (908) 276 1644 extension 513

**E-mail: lloyd_lescuck@kenilworthschools.com
Dr. Lloyd Leschuck, Superintendent**

Website: www.kenilworthschools.com

**BELVIDERE
WARREN COUNTY**

Preschool-12 District
118 Students in elementary school
281 Students in middle school
495 Students in high school

SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM STUDENTS:

2002-2003 SCHOOL YEAR 24

PROGRAM:

Belvidere is a small rural/suburban district with three schools: Third Street School (K-3), Oxford Street School (4-8) and Belvidere High School (9-12). The K-8 program serves the town of Belvidere, while the high school population also includes students from Harmony, Hope and White Townships. The district offers a comprehensive school program with particular strengths in the sciences, math, agriculture and technology education.

The mission of the Belvidere School District, a partnership of nurturing parents, dedicated faculty, and supportive communities, is to provide an exemplary education in a safe environment that empowers all students to become lifelong learners and to excel in a global society.

PARENT INFORMATION CENTER: (908) 475-6600

E-mail: pspagnoletti@belvideresd.org (Patrick Spagnoletti, Superintendent)

Website: www.belvideresd.org/

**AVAILABLE SEATS
for the
2003-2004 School Year**

Grade 1	1 seat
Grade 5	1 seat
Grade 6	2 seats
Grade 7	2 seats
Grade 8	2 seats
Grade 9	5 seats
Grade 10	2 seats

APPENDIX B:

**REGISTRATION FORM FOR
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP**

**INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOPS
REGISTRATION FORM**

SEND TO: Anne Schettino Casale

MAIL: Interdistrict Public School Choice
New Jersey Department of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500

FAX: (609) 292 1645

A technical assistance workshop will be provided for districts interested in applying to become choice districts in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program:

April 8, 2003	New Jersey Department of Education
10 a.m.-12 noon	4th floor conference room
	100 River View Plaza
	Trenton, New Jersey

The following people: _____

will attend the Technical Assistance Workshop.

District Name: _____

Street or Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ **Zip:** _____

County: _____

Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____

APPENDIX C:

**DIRECTIONS FOR
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WORKSHOP**

DIRECTIONS
THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
100 River View Plaza
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500
(609) 292-4041

FROM SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY

- Take Route 295 N. to Rt. 195 W. to Rt. 29 N. toward Trenton.
- Proceed on Rt. 29 N. through the tunnel staying in the left lane.
- At the first light after exiting the tunnel (Cass Street), turn left and enter the River View complex (where Waterfront Park is located). Follow the perimeter road and go to the last blue building on the left which is the Department of Education (DOE).

FROM THE NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE

- Take NJ Turnpike to exit 7A (Route 195 west).
- Proceed on Rt. 195 W. to Route 29 N. toward Trenton.
- Proceed on Rt. 29 N. through the tunnel staying in the left lane.
- At the first light after exiting the tunnel (Cass Street), turn left and enter the River View complex (where Waterfront Park is located). Follow the perimeter road and go to the last blue building on the left which is the Department of Education (DOE).

FROM ROUTE 1

- If north of Trenton, follow Route 1 S. and take exit at right for Route 129 S.
- Proceed on Rt. 129 S. to Cass St. which is the second traffic light.
- Turn right on Cass St. and take it straight into the River View complex. Follow the perimeter road and go to the last blue building on the left which is the Department of Education (DOE).

FROM PENNSYLVANIA

- Take Interstate 95 N. into New Jersey. Get off at the first exit which is Rt. 29 S. (immediately after the bridge into NJ).
- Proceed to River View Plaza which is on the right approximately 6.5 miles.

There is a visitors' lot between the DOE and Katmandu restaurant. If the lot is full, you may park in the garage across from building 100.

APPENDIX D:

SAMPLE

STUDENT APPLICATION FORMS

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM

(SAMPLE)

TO: The Superintendent/Chief School Administrator

DATE: _____

Name of the district where you live

As Parent/Legal Guardian of the student named below, I am submitting this written notification of my child's intention to participate in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program (school choice program) in September 2004. I understand that you will notify me in writing no later than [**first cycle: November 25, 2003**] [**second cycle: March 25, 2004**] whether or not my child may participate in the school choice program.

RE:

Your child's name

Your child's address

CURRENT SCHOOL: _____ **CURRENT GRADE:** _____

SIGNED: _____ **PRINT:** _____
Signature of Parent or Guardian Name of Parent or Guardian

Address of Parent or Guardian

Due to district of residence by [first cycle: November 3, 2003] [second cycle: March 3, 2004]

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM

**NOTIFICATION TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN RE
STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN THE
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE PROGRAM**

(SAMPLE)

TO: *(Name of Parent/Legal Guardian)*

FROM: *(Name)*, Superintendent
Name of District of Residence

DATE: *[first cycle: November 25, 2003] [second cycle: March 25, 2004]*

We have reviewed your Notice of Intent to Enroll *(Name of student)* in a choice district for the school year beginning September 2004 and have determined that *(Name of student)*

Check one:

1. **may** participate in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program. A copy of this notice must be included with the Application for Enrollment submitted for the student to the choice district.
2. **may not** participate in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program because *(provide complete explanation for determination made by district of residence.)*

IN FIRST APPLICATION CYCLE ONLY:

3. has been entered on the waiting list. The number assigned to the student is . The student may become eligible to participate in the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program during the second application cycle.

Due to parent/legal guardian by [first cycle: November 25, 2003] [second cycle: March 25,2004]

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT IN A CHOICE DISTRICT
(SAMPLE)

To be completed by the parent or legal guardian:

Name of Student Applicant: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

County: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please identify the following for which the student is applying:

Choice District

School

Class/Grade Level

Program if applicable

District of Residence: _____

A notice of intent to participate in the school choice program was provided to the district of residence by [**first cycle: November 3, 2003**] [**second cycle: March 3, 2004**]

SIGN: _____
Signature of Parent or Guardian

PRINT: _____
Name of Parent or Guardian

DATE: _____

If the district of residence has provided written notification that the student may participate in the school choice program, please attach the notification to this application.

Due to choice district by [first cycle: December 5, 2003] [second cycle: April 7, 2004]

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
NOTICE OF REJECTION
TO PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN OF STUDENT APPLICANT
(SAMPLE)

TO: (Name of Parent/Legal Guardian)
 (Address)

FROM: (Name), Superintendent
 (Name of Choice District)

DATE: *[first cycle: January 6, 2004] [second cycle: May 5, 2004]*

We are sorry to inform you that (Name of student applicant) has not been accepted as a choice program student in (Name of choice district) in (Name of school) in grade (enter grade) for September 2004.

The (Name of choice district) received more applications than there were seats available in (enter grade level) grade for the 2004-2005 school year and it was necessary for us to hold a lottery to select students for admission. Unfortunately, (Name of student applicant) was not selected. However, the student has been placed on our waiting list and assigned number (enter number.) Should a place become available, we will contact you to see if you are still interested,

We wish every success to (Name of student applicant) in the 2004-2005 school year and hope that you will consider applying to the (Name of choice district) for admission to the choice program in the future.

Due to parent or legal guardian of student by [first cycle: January 6, 2004] [second cycle: May 5, 2004]

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE
TO PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN OF STUDENT APPLICANT
(SAMPLE)

TO: (Name of Parent/Legal Guardian)
 (Address)

FROM: (Name), Superintendent
 (Name of Choice District)

DATE: *[first cycle: January 6, 2004] [second cycle: May 5, 2004]*

We are pleased to inform you that (Name of student applicant) has been accepted as a choice program student in (Name of Choice District) in grade (enter grade) at (Name of school) for enrollment beginning in September 2004.

Attached you will find a Notice of Intent to Enroll form. If you intend to enroll the student named above in (Name of choice district) for the 2004-2005 school year, you must complete the Notice of Intent to Enroll and return it to (Name of choice district) no later than *[first cycle: January 15, 2004] [second cycle: May 17, 2004]*.

Please be aware that filing the Notice of Intent to Enroll with (Name of choice district) obligates the student named above to remain enrolled in (Name of choice district) for at least the entire 2004-2005 school year.

Due to parent or legal guardian by [first cycle: January 6, 2004] [second cycle: May 5, 2004]

INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO ENROLL

(SAMPLE)

TO: (Name), Superintendent
(Name of choice district)

The undersigned, as parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of (Name of student) certify our intention to enroll (Name of student) in grade (enter grade level) at (Name of school) in (Name of choice district) for the school year beginning in September 2004. We understand that this Notice of Intent to Enroll is binding upon (Name of student) and that (Name of student) must remain enrolled in (Name of choice district) for at least the full 2004-2005 school year.

Signature Date: _____

Print name

Signature Date: _____

Print name

Due to choice district no later than [first cycle: January 15, 2004.] [second cycle: May 17, 2004]

APPENDIX E:
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
REGULATIONS
N.J.A.C. 6A:12

CHAPTER 12 INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

6A:12-1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the rules for an interdistrict public school choice program (choice program) in the Department of Education (Department) as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-1 et seq. The choice program is necessary to provide greater choice to parents and students in selecting a school which best meets the needs of the student and thus improves educational opportunities for New Jersey citizens. The choice program has the potential to improve the degree to which the education system is responsive to parents and students. It can also improve education and enhance efficiency by allowing a redistribution of students where some districts are overcrowded and others are under-enrolled. Finally, it can improve quality by creating a healthy competition among school districts.

6A:12-1.2 Scope

(a) Any school district in the State will be eligible to become a choice district whereby students outside of the district attend an educational program in the choice district free of charge. However, for the first year following the enactment of this chapter, there shall be in operation no more than 10 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county; for the second year, no more than 15 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county; and for the third, fourth and fifth years, no more than 21 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county.

(b) District boards of education may choose to participate in the choice program as choice districts by receiving choice students pursuant to this chapter. District boards of education shall not prevent or discourage students from participating in the choice program.

(c) District boards of education may not maintain at the same time both a tuition program pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3 and a choice program.

(d) District boards of education currently in a sending/receiving relationship are eligible to participate in the choice program unless otherwise legally prohibited.

6A:12-1.3 Definitions

The following words and terms, as used in this chapter, shall have the following meaning, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

“Annual maximum statutorily established amount” means the amount established for transportation of non-public school students in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1.

“Choice district” means a district board of education which chooses to participate in the choice program by receiving choice students and applies for and receives Commissioner approval of the choice program application.

“Choice program” means the Interdistrict Public School Choice Program authorized in N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-1 et seq.

“Choice student” means a student who applies for acceptance into a choice district.

“Sending district” means the choice student’s district of residence.

SUBCHAPTER 2. CHOICE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6A:12-2.1 Eligibility criteria for district boards of education

A district board of education of a school district established pursuant to Chapter 8 or Chapter 13 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes is eligible to participate in the choice program if it has classroom space available, completes an application form provided by the Department pursuant to this chapter, and receives approval from the Commissioner to participate.

6A:12-2.2 Eligibility criteria for students

(a) To be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall be enrolled at the time of application in grades K through nine in a school of the sending district and have attended school in the sending district for at least one full year immediately preceding enrollment in the choice district.

(b) Students residing out of State may not participate in the choice program.

SUBCHAPTER 3. CHOICE STUDENT ADMISSIONS

6A:12-3.1 Sending district procedures

(a) Upon adoption of a resolution, the district board of education of a sending district may limit the number of its students participating in the choice program.

1. The district board of education of a sending district may limit the total number of its students participating in the choice program to:

i. Two percent of the number of students per grade per year in the sending district limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to ii below; and/or
ii. Seven percent of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district.

2. The school board of a sending district may adopt a resolution to exceed the enrollment restriction percentages of (a)1i and ii above to a maximum of 10 percent of the number of students per grade per year, limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to this paragraph, and a maximum of 15 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district, provided that the Commissioner determines that the resolution:

i. Is in the best interest of the district's students;
ii. Will not adversely affect the district's programs, services, operations, or fiscal conditions; and
iii. Will not adversely affect or limit the diversity of the remainder of the student population in the district that do not participate in the choice program.

3. The district board of education of a sending district shall not compound enrollment restriction percentages adopted by any resolution pursuant to (a)1 and 2 above from year to year and shall base the enrollment counts for the year preceding on the sending district's initial year of participation in the choice program.

i. In any year of the program in which there is an increase in enrollment in the sending district, the percentage enrollment restriction may be applied to the increase and the result added to the preceding year's count of students eligible to attend a choice district. If there is a decrease in enrollment in the sending district at any time during the duration of this program, the number of students eligible to attend a choice district shall be the number of students enrolled in the choice program in the initial year of the district's participation in the program, provided that a student attending a choice district school shall be entitled to remain enrolled in that school until graduation.

ii. The enrollment counts in this paragraph shall be the enrollment counts as reported on the October Application for State School Aid for the year preceding the initial school year in which an enrollment restriction resolution is applicable.

4. A district board of education of a sending district may adopt a resolution to impose a limit on the number of its students participating in the choice program pursuant to this subsection. When the student notices of intention to participate in the choice program exceed that limit the sending district shall:

i. Hold a lottery to determine the selection of students for participation in the choice program; and

ii. Develop a waiting list based on the lottery to be used in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(c)4.

(b) The sending district's board of education may restrict enrollment of a student on the basis of an exceptional circumstance that would affect the sending district's instructional program upon the adoption of a resolution detailing the reason for the restriction. The restriction shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner.

6A:12-3.2 Choice district procedures

(a) Choice districts shall admit choice students on a space available basis.

1. A choice district may limit admissions to a particular grade level or to areas of concentration of the school, such as, mathematics, science, or the arts.

2. A choice district may establish reasonable criteria to evaluate prospective choice students, including the student's interest in the program offered by the choice district, which shall be outlined in the district board of education's application for choice program participation.

3. A choice district may give preference for enrollment to siblings of enrolled students.

4. Any student enrolled on a tuition basis in a district prior to the establishment of the choice program in that district shall be entitled to remain in that choice district as a choice student.

5. When a choice district receives more applications than there are spaces available, the choice district shall hold a lottery to determine the selection of students.

i. The choice district shall develop a waiting list based on the lottery to be used in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(g).

ii. A choice district shall give preference for enrollment in both application cycles to those students on the waiting list in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(e)1 and (g).

(b) No choice student shall be discriminated against on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a student with disabilities, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis prohibited by State or Federal law.

(c) A choice district shall not prohibit the enrollment of a student based upon a determination that the additional cost of educating the student would exceed the amount of additional State aid received as a result of the student's enrollment. A choice district may reject the application for enrollment of a student who has been classified as eligible for special education services pursuant to chapter 46 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes if that student's individualized education program could not be implemented in the district, or if the enrollment of that student would require the district to fundamentally alter the nature of its educational program, or would create an undue financial or administrative burden on the district.

SUBCHAPTER 4. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

6A:12-4.1 Choice program application procedures for a district board of education

(a) An eligible district board of education which chooses to participate in the choice program shall submit a completed application on a form provided by the Department no later than April 30 in the year prior to the school year in which the choice program will be implemented which shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

1. Identification of the number of available openings to choice students by program, grade level and school building;
2. Identification of those districts likely to participate as sending districts in the choice program;
3. A description of the student selection process and any criteria required for admission which includes at least the following information:
 - i. A mechanism for screening out choice student applicants during the application process who wish to attend for extracurricular, athletic or social reasons;
 - ii. A mechanism to ensure that no choice student's learning ability is inhibited due to an excessive amount of time in transit; and
 - iii. A mechanism to ensure that choice students accepted are selected through a random unbiased process;
4. Establishment of a regionwide public information program and a parent information center as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:12-7.1(b) and (d);
5. A description of the choice district, its schools, its programs, its policies and procedures; and
6. An analysis of the potential impact of the program on student population diversity in the likely participating districts and a plan for maintaining diversity in the likely participating districts, which plan shall not be used to supersede a court-ordered or administrative court-ordered desegregation plan.

(b) The Commissioner shall notify applicants regarding approval or denial of program participation no later than July 30 in accordance with (a) above. The notification to applicants who are not approved shall include reasons for the denial.

(c) The Commissioner shall annually prepare a list of approved choice districts and make the list available to the public.

(d) The Commissioner may take appropriate action, consistent with State and federal law, to provide that student population diversity in all districts participating in a choice district program is maintained. Student population diversity shall include, but not be limited to, the ethnic, racial, economic, and geographic diversity of a district's student population. The action may include, but need not be limited to:

1. Directing a choice district to take appropriate steps to successfully implement the district's plan for maintaining student population diversity;
2. Restricting the number of choice students from a sending district or the authority of a choice district to accept choice students in the future; and
3. Revoking the approval of the choice district. Any choice student who is attending a designated school in a choice district at the time of the Commissioner's revocation of approval shall be entitled to continue to be enrolled in that school until graduation.

6A:12-4.2 Criteria to guide the Commissioner's approval of choice program applications

(a) In the evaluation of the application, the Commissioner shall take into account the following in selecting approved choice districts:

1. The quality and variety of programs offered for choice student(s) participation;
2. The potential effectiveness of the student selection mechanisms and of the admissions criteria established in the application;
3. The status of the applicant district(s) in Statewide monitoring and assessment;
4. The applicant's previous experience with choice programs;
5. The budgetary ramifications for the applicant district(s);
6. The fiscal ramifications of approval on any district(s) currently in a sending/receiving relationship;
7. The impact on student population diversity in the district; and
8. The degree to which the program will promote or reduce educational quality in the choice district and the sending districts.

6A:12-4.3 Choice student application procedures

(a) The Commissioner shall establish two student application cycles to ensure that parents have adequate opportunities to participate in the choice program. The first cycle shall be held in the fall. The second cycle shall be held in the spring when there are open seats in the choice district not filled during the first cycle.

(b) In the first application cycle, the student's parent or legal guardian shall provide a written notice to the sending district of the student's intention to participate in the choice program no later than November 1 for initial enrollment beginning the following school year in a choice district. In the second application cycle, the written notice shall be provided no later than the following March 1.

(c) In the first application cycle, the sending district board of education shall provide written notification to the student's parent or legal guardian no later than November 27 that the student may participate in the choice program or that the student may not participate in the choice program. In the second application cycle, the written notice shall be provided no later than the following March 25.

1. Prior to any lottery that may be held according to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.1(a)4i, and prior to the provision of any notice required under (c) above, the sending district shall verify that the student is enrolled in the sending district and was reported on the Application for State School Aid in October.

2. The notice shall state the reason that the student may not participate in the choice program, if any, and shall, where appropriate, provide information regarding the waiting list established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.1(a)4ii.

3. When the district board of education of a sending district adopts a resolution to impose a limit on the number of its students participating in the choice program, the sending district shall determine, in the second application cycle, when the limit has been reached based on the notices of intent to enroll that it receives from a choice district pursuant to (h) below.

4. In the event that the district board of education of a sending district holds a lottery as required in N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.1(a)4, the notice for the second application cycle required in (c) above shall be provided to the parent or legal guardian of the next student(s) on the waiting list developed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.1(a)4ii.

5. In the event that a sending district fails to provide timely notification in compliance with (c) above, the student's parent or legal guardian may submit an application to the choice district notwithstanding the requirement in (d)2 below.

(d) In the first application cycle, the student's parent or legal guardian must submit an application to the choice district no later than December 5 for initial enrollment beginning

the following school year. In the second application cycle, the application shall be submitted no later than the following April 5.

1. The parent or legal guardian shall identify the student, the student's district of residence, the grade level and school the student is currently attending in the district of residence, and the program, grade level and school building of the choice district for which the student is applying.

2. The student's parent or legal guardian must also submit with the application the written notification from the sending district that the student may participate in the choice program pursuant to (c) above, except in the event that a sending district fails to provide timely notification as provided for in (c)5 above.

(e) In the first application cycle, the choice district shall notify the parent or legal guardian in writing no later than January 5 whether the application has been accepted or rejected. In the second application cycle, the written notice shall be provided no later than the following May 5.

1. If an application is rejected, the choice district shall state the reason for rejection in the notification and shall provide information regarding the waiting list required pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)5ii.

2. In the event that the district board of education of a choice district holds a lottery as required in N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)5i, the notice for the second application cycle required in (e) above shall be provided first to the parent or legal guardian of the next student(s) on the waiting list developed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)5ii.

(f) In the first application cycle, the parent or legal guardian shall provide written notification to the choice district no later than January 15 whether the choice student intends to enroll in the choice district. In the second application cycle, the written notice of intent to enroll shall be provided no later than the following May 15.

1. Notice of intent to enroll in the choice district obligates the choice student to attend the choice district during the following school year, unless the sending district and the choice district agree in writing to allow the choice student to transfer back to the sending district.

2. Notice of intent to enroll is not binding if the choice student's parents or legal guardians change residence to another district.

(g) During the first application cycle, in the event that a choice district does not receive enough notices of intent to enroll to fill all available spaces, the choice district shall provide a written notice, no later than January 25, to the parent or legal guardian of the next student(s) on the waiting list established pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:12-3.2(a)5ii that the student(s) is accepted. In the second application cycle, the notice shall be provided no later than the following May 25.

1. In the first application cycle, the parent or legal guardian shall provide written notification to the choice district no later than February 4 whether the choice student intends to enroll in the choice district. In the second application cycle, the written notice of intent to enroll shall be provided no later than June 4.

(h) The choice district shall provide written notification to the sending district's board of education within 10 days of receipt of a notice of intent to enroll from a choice student resident in that district.

SUBCHAPTER 5. CHOICE STUDENT POST ENROLLMENT POLICIES

6A:12-5.1 Choice student enrollment

Once enrolled in a choice district, the choice student may remain enrolled and is not required to submit annual or periodic applications. Upon acceptance of a choice student, the choice district is obligated to retain the choice student until graduation or until the choice student voluntarily withdraws limited by N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(f)1. In the event of termination of the choice program in

that district or Statewide, any student enrolled in that choice district shall be entitled to remain enrolled in that district until graduation.

6A:12-5.2 Choice student transfer

(a) A choice student may transfer back to the sending district except as limited by N.J.A.C. 6A:12-4.3(f)1.

(b) A choice student may apply to attend a different choice district by following the choice student application procedures set forth in 6A:12-4.3.

SUBCHAPTER 6. APPEALS

6A:12-6.1 Appeals from Commissioner determinations

(a) An appeal of any determination by the Commissioner not to grant an application for participation in the choice program may be filed by an eligible choice district applicant with the State Board of Education according to N.J.A.C. 6:2.

1. Within 30 days of receipt of the notice of appeal, the Commissioner shall transmit all documents, correspondence and evaluations which constitute the record to the State Board of Education.

6A:12-6.2 Appeals from denial of enrollment

An appeal of any denial of an eligible choice student applicant for enrollment in a choice district may be filed by the parent or legal guardian with the Commissioner in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6:24.

SUBCHAPTER 7. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHOICE DISTRICTS

6A:12-7.1 General provisions

(a) Choice districts shall accept all credits toward graduation that were awarded by another district board of education for each choice student it accepts.

1. Choice districts shall award a diploma to a choice student participating in the program if that student meets its graduation requirements and the requirements of the State of New Jersey.

(b) Choice districts shall establish a regionwide public information program which provides information to the public that includes the following:

1. Notification that the district is a choice district;
2. Information regarding student application procedures;
3. Information regarding the district, its schools, its programs, its policies and procedures; and

4. Any other information a choice district deems appropriate.

(c) A choice district shall file interim reports and an annual report [no later than August 1] with the Department on dates set by the Commissioner. A choice district shall submit the reports on a form provided by the Department that includes demographic and student participation information, fiscal and programmatic information, and an update on the number of available openings.

(d) Choice districts shall establish and maintain a parent information center.

1. The center shall assist parents and legal guardians in submitting applications for enrollment of students in an appropriate program and school.

2. All materials available through the regionwide public information program established pursuant to (b) above shall be made available to parents and legal guardians at the parent information center.

SUBCHAPTER 8. TRANSPORTATION

6A:12-8.1 Student transportation

(a) Each choice district shall have the responsibility for the transportation of enrolled choice students, who are eligible for transportation services both to and from the choice school in which that student is accepted. Each choice district shall provide transportation or aid in lieu of transportation in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:36A-3 and N.J.A.C. 6:21-27.

SUBCHAPTER 9. FUNDING

6A:12-9.1 General provisions

(a) Choice students participating in this program shall qualify for State aid pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-1 et seq.

(b) The sending district shall maintain fiscal responsibility for any choice student enrolled in or determined to require a private day or residential school.

SUBCHAPTER 10. CHOICE PROGRAM REPORTS

6A:12-10.1 Annual report

(a) The Commissioner shall annually report to the State Board of Education and the Legislature on the effectiveness of the choice program. No later than June 30 following the second year of the operation of the program the report shall include a recommendation on the continuation of the program.

1. N.J.S.A. 18A:36B-1 et seq. requires the State Legislature's Joint Committee on the Public Schools to conduct an evaluation of the program after the first two years. The act requires the Joint Committee to commission an independent study to be conducted by an individual or entity primarily identified with expertise in the field of education

APPENDIX F:
SCHOOL CHOICE TRANSPORTATION
REGULATIONS
N.J.A.C. 6A:27-4

SUBCHAPTER 4. SCHOOL CHOICE TRANSPORTATION

6A:27-4.1 General provisions

(a) Transportation or aid in lieu of transportation shall be provided pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1 et seq. A choice school shall be considered a public school offering a specialized program. \

1. The choice district shall be entitled to State aid pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-25 for each eligible choice school student transported.
2. The choice district shall supply any information necessary for the calculation of State transportation aid.

(b) Choice districts are responsible for providing transportation to enrolled choice students who are eligible for transportation.

1. By August 1, the choice district shall notify the parent or legal guardian of each choice student regarding the arrangements which have been made for the provision of transportation services.
2. In the event that the cost of transportation services exceeds the annual maximum statutorily established amount for nonpublic school students, then the parents or legal guardians may submit a written request to the choice district for such transportation to be provided. This request shall be made within seven days of receipt of the choice district's notification to the parents or legal guardians.
 - i. If such a request is made, the choice district shall provide transportation services and the parents or legal guardians of the choice student shall pay the amount in excess of the annual established maximum to the choice district. Parents or legal guardians shall pay this amount in the manner prescribed by the choice district.
 - ii. If the parents or legal guardians of the choice student do not submit a written request for transportation services to the choice district within seven days of receipt of the choice district's notice, then the choice student shall not be entitled to transportation, but the parents or legal guardians shall receive the annual maximum statutorily established amount in lieu of transportation.
3. If the choice district provides aid in lieu of transportation to the parents or legal guardians, then that amount shall be consistent with the amount established for nonpublic school students in N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1 and that payment may be adjusted for late registration or early withdrawal.
 - i. The parents or legal guardians of choice students who receive aid in lieu of transportation shall submit a voucher for payment supplied by the choice district in accordance with choice district policies.

- ii. The choice district shall pay aid in lieu of transportation for each half of the academic year after the voucher for payment is submitted by the parents or legal guardians of the choice student.
 - iii. The choice district shall not be required to pay aid in lieu of transportation when it receives the voucher for payment after the close of the fiscal year.
- (c) The choice district shall administer transportation contracts in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:27-9.
- (d) The choice district shall not be responsible for providing transportation services for choice students residing less than two miles in grades K through eight and less than two and one half miles in grades nine through 12, or more than 20 miles from the choice district's school.

6A:27-4.2 Eligibility requirements

- (a) Choice students who reside more than two miles in grades K through eight and more than two and one half miles in grades nine through twelve and who reside 20 miles or less from the choice district's school are eligible for transportation services, unless the cost of such services exceeds the annual maximum statutorily established amount per student for nonpublic school transportation.
- (b) Special education students attending a choice school shall meet the distance requirements in (a) above or transportation must be a requirement of the student's Individualized Education Program in order to be eligible for transportation

APPENDIX G:
INTERDISTRICT PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE
PROGRAM ACT OF 1999
N.J.S.A. 18A:36B

18A:36B-1 Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Interdistrict Public School Choice Program Act of 1999."

L.1999,c.413,s.1, eff. Jan. 18, 2000

18A:36B-2 Definitions

As used in this act:

"Choice district" means a public school district ¹, established pursuant to chapter 8 or chapter 13 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes,¹ which is authorized under the interdistrict public school choice program to open a school or schools to students from sending districts;

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education;

"Receiving district" means the district receiving a student from a sending district;

"Sending district" means the district of residence of a student.

L.1999,c.413,s.2, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-3 Interdistrict public school choice program; creation of choice districts

The Commissioner of Education shall establish an interdistrict public school choice program which shall provide for the creation of choice districts as follows: for the first year of the program, no more than 10 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county; for the second year, no more than 15 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county; and for the third, fourth and fifth years, no more than 21 choice districts Statewide and no more than one per county. A choice district may enroll students across district lines in designated schools of the choice district.

L.1999,c.413,s.3, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-4 Submission of application; student population diversity.

a. A proposed choice district shall submit an application to the commissioner no later than April 30 in the year prior to the school year in which the choice program will be implemented; except that for the first year of implementation of the program the application shall be submitted no later than the date specified by the commissioner. The application shall include, but not be limited to, the following information:

(1) a description of programs and schools and the number of student openings in each school identified by grade level which are available for selection;

(2) the provision for the creation of a parent information center;

(3) a description of the student application process and any criteria required for admission;

(4) an analysis of the potential impact of the program on student population diversity in all potential participating districts and a plan for maintaining diversity in all potential participating districts, which plan shall not be used to supersede a court-ordered or administrative court-ordered desegregation plan; and

(5) the provision for screening out students during the application process who wish to attend a school for athletic, extracurricular or social reasons.

The commissioner shall notify a choice district of the approval or disapproval of its application no later than July 30, and the reasons for disapproval shall be included in the notice. An appeal of any determination by the commissioner not to grant an application for participation in the choice program may be filed by a school district with the State Board of Education.

b. The commissioner may take appropriate action, consistent with State and federal law, to provide that student population diversity in all districts participating in a choice district program is maintained. Student population diversity shall include, but not be limited to, the ethnic, racial, economic, and geographic diversity of a district's student population. The actions may include, but not be limited to:

(1) directing a choice district to take appropriate steps to successfully implement the district's plan for maintaining student population diversity;

(2) restricting the number of choice program students from a sending district or the authority of a choice district to accept choice program students in the future; and

(3) revoking approval of the choice district. Any choice program student who is attending a designated school in a choice district at the time of the commissioner's revocation of approval shall be entitled to continue to be enrolled in that school until graduation.

1.1999,c.413,s.4, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-5 Evaluation of applications; criteria

The commissioner shall evaluate an application submitted by a proposed choice district according to the following criteria:

- a. the fiscal impact on the district;
- b. the quality and variety of academic programs offered within the district;
- c. the potential effectiveness of the student application process and of the admissions criteria utilized;
- d. the impact on student population diversity in the district; and
- e. the degree to which the program will promote or reduce educational quality in the choice district and the sending districts.

L.1999,c.413,s.5, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-6 Approval conditions.

Any school choice district established by the commissioner prior to the effective date of this act is authorized to continue operation as if the choice district had been approved pursuant to the provisions of this act. The commissioner shall not, prior to the effective date of section 11 of this act, approve any additional choice districts or modify or increase the scope of the interdistrict public school choice programs in the choice districts except in conformance with sections 4 and 5 of this act.

L.1999,c.413,s.16, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-7 Notification of intent to participate by parent or guardian; eligibility and process

a. The parents or guardian of a student shall notify the sending district of the student's intention to participate in the choice program and shall submit an application to the choice district, indicating the school the student wishes to attend, no later than the date specified by the commissioner. To be eligible to participate in the program, a student shall be enrolled at the time of application in grades K through 9 in a school of the sending district and have attended school in the sending district for at least one full year immediately preceding enrollment in the choice district. Openings in a designated school of a choice district shall be on a space available basis, and if more applications are received for a designated school than there are spaces available, a lottery shall be held to determine the selection of students. Preference for enrollment may be given to siblings of students who are enrolled in a designated school.

b. A choice district may evaluate a prospective student on reasonable criteria, including the student's interest in the program offered by a designated school. The district shall not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of athletic ability, intellectual aptitude, English language proficiency, status as a handicapped person, or any other basis prohibited by State or federal law.

c. A choice district shall not prohibit the enrollment of a student based upon a determination that the additional cost of educating the student would exceed the amount of additional State aid received as a result of the student's enrollment. A choice district may reject the application for enrollment of a student who has been classified as eligible for special education services pursuant to chapter 46 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes if that student's individualized education program could not be implemented in the district, or if the enrollment of that student would require the district to fundamentally alter the nature of its educational program, or would create an undue financial or administrative burden on the district.

d. A student whose application is rejected by a choice district shall be provided with a reason for the rejection in the letter of notice. The appeal of a rejection notice may be made to the commissioner.

e. Once a student is enrolled in a designated school, the student shall not be required to reapply for each school year and shall continue to be enrolled until graduation. A student shall be

permitted to transfer back to a school of the sending district or may apply to a different choice district during the next application period.

f. A choice district shall accept all of the credits earned toward graduation by a student in the schools of the sending district.

g. A choice district shall notify a sending district upon the enrollment of a choice program student resident in that district.

L.1999,c.413,s.6, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-8 Calculating State aid; restriction of enrollment by board

a. For the purpose of calculating State aid for a choice program student in a choice district, the student shall not be counted in the resident enrollment of the receiving district for the calculation of core curriculum standards aid, but shall be treated in the same manner as a student who resides in the receiving district for purpose of calculating all other forms of State aid under the "Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996," P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-1 et seq.). The receiving district shall receive school choice aid for each choice program student in the amount of the weighted per pupil T & E amount established pursuant to section 12 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-12); except that for a choice program student who attends a district factor group A or B receiving district, the receiving district shall receive the weighted per pupil maximum T & E amount.

b. (1) Upon adoption of a resolution, the school board of a sending district may restrict enrollment of its students in a choice district to 2% ¹[or greater]¹ of the number of students per grade level per year in the sending district, limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(2) Upon adoption of a resolution, the school board of a sending district may restrict enrollment of its students in a choice district to 7% ¹[or greater]¹ of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district.

(3) The school board of a sending district may adopt a resolution to exceed the enrollment restriction percentages of paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection to a maximum of 10% of the number of students per grade level per year limited by any resolution adopted pursuant to this paragraph and 15% of the total number of students enrolled in the sending district, provided that the resolution shall be subject to approval by the commissioner upon a determination that the resolution is in the best interest of the district's students and that it will not adversely affect the district's programs, services, operations, or fiscal conditions, and that the resolution will not adversely affect or limit the diversity of the remainder of the student population in the district who do not participate in the choice program.

(4) Enrollment restriction percentages adopted by any resolution pursuant to paragraphs (1), (2), or (3) shall not be compounded from year to year and shall be based upon the enrollment counts for the year preceding the sending district's initial year of participation in the choice program, except that in any year of the program in which there is an increase in enrollment, the percentage enrollment restriction may be applied to the increase and the result added to the preceding year's

count of students eligible to attend a choice district. If there is a decrease in enrollment at any time during the duration of the program, the number of students eligible to attend a choice district shall be the number of students enrolled in the choice program in the initial year of the district's participation in the program, provided that a student attending a choice district school shall be entitled to remain enrolled in that school until graduation.

(5) The calculation of the enrollment of a sending district shall be based on the enrollment count as reported on the Application for State School Aid in October preceding the school year during which the restriction on enrollment shall be applicable.

c. The school board of a sending district may restrict enrollment of a student on the basis of an exceptional circumstance that would affect the sending district's instructional program upon the adoption of a resolution detailing the reasons for the restriction. The restriction shall be subject to the approval of the commissioner.

d. A choice district shall not be eligible to enroll students on a tuition basis pursuant to N.J.S.18A:38-3 while participating in the public school choice program. Any student enrolled on a tuition basis prior to the establishment of the choice program shall be entitled to remain enrolled in the choice district as a choice program student.

L.1999,c.413.s.7, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-9 Transportation

Transportation, or aid in lieu of transportation, shall be provided to an elementary school pupil who lives more than two miles from the receiving district school of attendance and to a secondary school pupil who lives more than two and one-half miles from the receiving district school of attendance, provided the receiving district school is not more than 20 miles from the residence of the pupil. Transportation, or aid in lieu of transportation, shall be the responsibility of the choice district.

L.1999,c.413,s.8, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-10 Parent information center.

A choice district shall establish and maintain a parent information center. The center shall collect and disseminate information about participating programs and schools and shall assist parents and guardians in submitting applications for enrollment of students in an appropriate program and school.

L.199,c.413,s.9, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-11 Annual report

a. The commissioner shall annually report to the State Board of Education and the Legislature on the effectiveness of the interdistrict public school choice program. No later than June 30 following the second year of the operation of the program the report shall include a recommendation on the continuation of the program.

b. The Joint Committee on the Public Schools shall commission an independent study of the first two years of the operation of the program. The study shall be conducted by an individual or entity primarily identified with expertise in the field of education. The individual or entity shall design a comprehensive study of the program which shall include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following:

(1) the impact of the choice program on the sending district's students, staff, parents, educational programs, and finances;

(2) the impact of the choice program on the choice district's students, staff, parents, educational programs, and finances; and

(3) the impact of the choice program on student enrollment patterns.

Before undertaking the study, the Joint Committee on the Public Schools shall hold a public hearing to solicit public comments regarding all features of the study. Prior to the hearing, the committee shall disseminate a draft of the proposed study including, but not limited to, the content, procedures, criteria and methodology to be used.

c. On or before January 1 of the third year of the program, the Joint Committee on the Public Schools shall submit a report to the Legislature on the implementation of the choice program based on the study and the commissioner's annual reports to the Legislature, which report shall include a recommendation on whether the program should be continued in accordance with the provisions of section 3 of this act. If the Legislature does not act on the recommendation by the adoption of a concurrent resolution within 60 days of the Joint Committee's submission of the report, then the program shall be continued in accordance with the provisions of section 3 of this act.

L.1999,c.413,s.10, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-12 Appropriations

a. There shall annually be appropriated for the first two years of the choice program \$1,600,000 and annually for the third through fifth years of the program \$3,000,000, or such other amounts as may be necessary, to the Department of Education. The funds shall be distributed by the commissioner for the purpose of funding school choice aid awarded pursuant to subsection a. of section 7 of P.L. , c. (C.) (now pending before the Legislature as this bill) for choice program students from a sending district that does not qualify for core curriculum standards aid pursuant to section 15 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-15).

b. There shall annually be appropriated such additional amounts in core curriculum standards aid as may be necessary to prevent any increase in the local share of school districts as a result of the authorization for sending districts to count resident pupils attending a choice district in their weighted enrollment pursuant to section 13 of P.L.1996, c.138 (C.18A:7F-13).

L.1999,c.413,s.14, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-13 Student enrolled upon expiration of program

Any student enrolled in a designated school in a choice district upon the expiration of the choice program shall be entitled to remain enrolled in that school until graduation.

L.1999,c.413,s.15, eff. Jan. 18, 2000.

18A:36B-17

17. Sections 1-10 and 12-15 of this act shall take effect immediately; section 11 of this act shall take effect one year after the date of enactment; sections 1 through 10 inclusive shall expire on June 30 following the fifth full year of the operation of the interdistrict public school choice program.